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day succeeding, rather than preceding, the meeting of the planters and adventurers at Sir John Wolstenholme's. For the use of the word Canada (I, 239 and elsewhere) where Acadia is meant, very slight justification could be produced. The authority on which the statement is based I have not at hand, but I query whether the words "expressly disallowed by the commissioners of the customs" (II, 464) could in any case correctly describe the action of that board upon a colonial law. That power belonged to the king in council, while the commissioners of the customs were subordinated to the treasury board, and had no control over legislation except through report and advice.

HERBERT L. OSGOOD.

The Building of a Nation: The Growth, Present Condition and Resources of the United States, with a Forecast of the Future. By HENRY GANNETT, Chief Geographer of the Geological Survey and of the Tenth and Eleventh Censuses. New York, The Henry T. Thomas Company, 1895. — 252 pp.

This book consists principally of a recapitulation of the chief results of the last census of the United States, profusely illustrated with maps, charts and diagrams. In the first fifty pages the author deals with the geography of the country, the organization of the federal, state and territorial governments, public debts, the budget, the army and the navy, pensions and public lands. Then comes a lengthy treatment of population, followed by shorter sections on agriculture, manufactures, mineral resources, transportation, and finance and wealth. The whole is put together in such a way as to give the impression of a book made to sell rather than of a serious effort to portray scientifically the progress of the country. A man of Mr. Gannett's official position should have given his readers the benefit of his training and experience so as to save them from the danger of confusion of facts, illogical inferences and unfounded assumptions. The book suffers from comparison with similar work done by the official statisticians of other countries, such as Rauchberg's *Bevölkerung Oesterreichs*, de Foville's *La France Économique*, Bodio's *Di alcuni Indici Misuratori del Movimento Economico in Italia*, and (in a more restricted field) Giffen's *Growth of Capital*. He might have learned something also from the recent work of his own chief, Carroll D. Wright, in the *Industrial Evolution of the United States*.

This may seem to be a harsh judgment of a book that is intended

to be popular; but at the present time surely the world demands that even a book intended for popular use shall be scientific in method and tone. I think Mr. Gannett has failed to use his material with the necessary care and discrimination. He masses together the results of the Eleventh Census without much regard to their validity or relative importance; and in many cases he does not exercise the critical acumen necessary in dealing with the very complicated phenomena of population in the United States. Many examples of weakness in these two directions might be cited. He drags in the calculated "center of population," which never has had and never will have the slightest importance. He distributes the population according to altitude, to temperature and to rainfall, without explaining the connection of the two things in each case. Urban population is elaborately treated, but nothing is said in regard to the importance, cause and influence of the wonderful growth of the cities. Size of families is dismissed with a single page, although it receives great attention in the census. The preponderance of males in the United States is attributed solely to immigration, although an excess is found among the native-born both of native and of foreign parentage, where immigration cannot be a cause. Mr. Gannett's method of wage statistics (p. 178) is antiquated and fallacious; and his method of dividing the product between employees and capitalists has been denounced by his own chief¹ and is calculated to give rise to all sorts of misconceptions.

Some of Mr. Gannett's conclusions seem to rest on inadequate data. Thus on the basis of the mortality returns of large Southern cities, he attributes to the colored race a mortality "little less on the average than double that of the whites." Surely such evidence is not conclusive as to the general mortality of the blacks. Again, after comparing the very doubtful death-rate calculated by the Eleventh Census with the rates of European countries, he says: "From this showing it would appear that the Americans live longer than the citizens of any European country" (p. 156). But even if our death-rate were entirely trustworthy, that would not necessarily mean a longer average duration of life. So, in showing that the foreign-born are more numerous represented among criminals and paupers than in the population as a whole, the author forgets that the age distribution has a powerful influence on the numbers. Finally, the "distribution of wealth" (p. 228), certainly one of the most important considerations in reviewing the progress of the nation, is based

¹ Bulletin of the Department of Labor, No. 3, March, 1896.

on estimates whose source and validity we have absolutely no means of testing.

The book is doubtless intended to be popular, in the ordinary sense, but even here the author overshoots his mark. The introduction declares: "In numbers, wealth, industry, enterprise, ease and dignity of living—in short, in all that goes to make civilization—the American Republic, at the end of the first century, stands the acknowledged leader of the nations of the earth." Elsewhere (p. 16) the author describes our country as "*facile princeps* in all the elements of national greatness." One reason for this prosperity the author alleges to be "wise and liberal legislation"; yet he believes in free trade, thinks the Indian has been badly treated, and is in favor of restriction of immigration.

His "forecast of the future" is optimistic. The government will increase in strength as the nation increases in numbers and in wealth; it will develop, but not on socialistic lines; the spoils system will be abolished; the masses of the people will be better fed, clothed and housed; immigration will be closely restricted; pauperism and crime will diminish; woman will no longer be secondary to man, but his equal, or rather his supplement, taking an active part in business and in government; spelling reform will be carried out; government will assume control of corporations as they increase in wealth and power; free trade will be established; we shall colonize Canada, Mexico and Central America; electricity will do all our work, from rocking the cradle to drawing the hearse, from running a sewing machine to operating a railway system.

This prognostication seems to be the subjective speculation of the author rather than a conclusion drawn inductively from the previous portions of the book.

RICHMOND MAYO-SMITH.

State Railroad Control, with a History of its Development in Iowa. By FRANK H. DIXON, with an Introduction by Henry C. Adams. Boston, Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., 1896. — 251 pp. and map.

This volume, the ninth in the Library of Economics and Politics which is being published under the direction of Professor Ely, treats of that important part of railway transportation which is conducted within the territorial limits of single states and is consequently subject to the legal restrictions and conditions imposed by state laws.